



Trademarking a color

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Q What's your favorite color? And how can you stop others from using it?

A Generally, you can't claim exclusive right to a color. But there are some exceptions. Trademarks can protect colors for certain uses if the color serves no function and is distinctive for the goods or services (e.g., UPS: brown for delivery services; Owens Corning: pink for insulation; Boise State University: blue for artificial turf). If you want to trademark a color for a particular use, the odder the color choice for that use the better. Also, if you discover a new color pigment, you may be able to patent the chemical formula for that pigment. Google "OSU blue pigment" for a fun story. But that won't happen often.